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## **Rep. Gary Miller Introduces Bill To Ensure Consumers Can Resolve Medical Debt Before It Is Reported To Credit Bureaus**

Washington, D.C. – Rep. Gary Miller (CA-31) today introduced legislation to give consumers more time to ensure that only accurate medical debt is reported to credit bureaus. H.R. 2211, the Accuracy in Reporting Medical Debt Act will ensure that consumers have ample time to resolve medical billing questions and potential errors before medical debt can be reported to the credit bureaus.

Minor billing and processing errors for medical services can have major consequences for an individual's credit score. Unpaid medical debt that is reported to credit bureaus- regardless of whether it is under \$100, erroneous, or disputed - can shave up to 100 points off an individual's credit score. Regrettably, our healthcare system contributes to the problem by sending confusing and conflicting statements from medical providers and insurance companies.

Congressman Miller explained, "Every year, families in my district, and across the country, are hit with confusing and costly medical bills. The personal and financial toll of dealing with a medical emergency or serious illness is difficult enough. Unfortunately, for many patients and their families, our nation's complex and broken healthcare system inflicts additional pain by damaging their ability to access credit."

The Accuracy in Reporting Medical Debt Act will ensure that consumers have time to reconcile their medical debt and pay what they truly owe for a medical procedure. By establishing parameters for reporting medical debt to the credit bureaus, the bill would ensure medical debts are not prematurely reported before a consumer has time to resolve them.

In particular, the bill would delay the ability of a debt collector to report medical debt to a credit bureau, if the consumer notifies the debt collector that:

- The consumer is continuing to work with an insurance company;
- The consumer did not know that the debt existed; or
- The consumer has applied for financial assistance.

Commenting on the introduction of the Accuracy in Reporting Medical Debt Act, Congressman Miller said, "Given the negative impact of the premature reporting of medical debt, we

introduced this bipartisan legislation to help make certain that only real unpaid debt, not medical billing errors or bills pending with insurance companies or being disputed, are reported to credit bureaus.

This common sense proposal will help ensure that my constituents and Americans across the country are not unfairly denied access to credit or forced to fork over thousands of dollars in higher interest rates and fees when they wish to buy or refinance a home or purchase a new family car because of a medical billing error, a slow insurance company or simply because they are seeking financial assistance for the debt. With our economy still recovering, it is critical that creditworthy consumers are able to access the financing they need to enter the housing market, refinance their homes, or other credit-based products and services.”

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